

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

May 1, 2012

In the Matter of)	
)	
Lifeline and Link Up Reform and Modernization)	WC Docket No. 11-42
)	
Lifeline and Link Up)	WC Docket No. 03-109
)	
Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service)	CC Docket No. 96-45
)	
)	WC Docket No. 12-23
Advancing Broadband Availability Through Digital Literacy Training)	

Dear Sir/Madame:

We are writing today in response to the FCC's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking which, among other things, proposes a Digital Literacy Pilot to fund schools and libraries operating digital literacy training courses. Before delving into our response to the proposed pilot, we want to first thank the FCC for your continued support for the E-Rate program. The E-Rate program provides critical discounts to assist schools (like mine) to obtain affordable telecommunications and internet access.

Our corporation is in the middle of Parke County, Indiana which is a rural community where it is hard to get internet service and/or have local businesses that offer free internet. Additionally, we are in need of E-Rate funding to help with our high poverty in this area. We had approximately 65% free or reduced students in our corporation this year. Our mission is to prepare our students for their futures whether it would be to attend college or enter the workforce. Either way, the telecommunications and internet funding we receive from E-Rate are essential to our success as educators since many of our students do not have access to this technology outside of the school day. Additionally, the State continues to cut funds and we count on E-Rate funds to help offset the cost of providing important internet and E-Rate eligible resources that our students would not have otherwise.

Although a Digital Literacy program is important, we are concerned that operating the pilot through E-Rate will undermine the important and ongoing work of E-Rate, causing delays in the program's application and appeal processes, creating auditing problems and results in problematic precedents for E-Rate's eligible services. **Specifically, we oppose the proposal to operate/administer the proposed pilot through the E-Rate program.**

Additionally, we are concerned that it would not only change our Eligible Services List but eventually take funds away from our schools because of the added expense of managing this type of program. We also feel it will set a precedent and other similar programs would be added which will again lead to underfunding

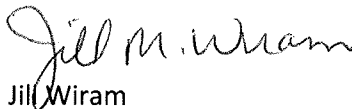
our public schools and libraries. We are requesting that you to take a closer look at how E-Rate is already underfunded considering the number of existing requests that are made on behalf of schools that do not receive funds.

Thank you for considering my response as you move forward with your decision on the Digital Literacy Pilot. We applaud the FCC for its continued efforts to protect the already oversubscribed E-Rate program by not funding the pilot with E-Rate funding. We urge you to take similar protective measures when it comes to the implementation and administration of the pilot; please ensure that critical, limited E-Rate resources—both fiscal and administrative—are protected.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leonard R. Orr".

Leonard R. Orr
Superintendent

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jill M. Wiram".

Jill Wiram
Director of Instructional Technology